



Getting started with play-based learning in early years

Transcription: What is an adult's role in play-based learning?

Interviewees:

Dr David Whitebread

Developmental Cognitive Psychologist and early years expert

What is an adult's role in play-based learning?


Historically, there was a phase when it was thought play-based learning was important, that children learn very well through playful activities but that adults shouldn't get involved. That the adults should stand back and simply observe and let the children get on with it.

We now know this is a mistaken view, that actually there is enormous benefit in adults, in early childhood educational practitioners for example, involving themselves in various ways in children's play and if you're going to provide high quality playful learning the adult certainly needs to observe but needs also to plan for playful opportunities and to personally get involved in children's play-based learning.

We know, for example, that children learn a lot from imitating adults, from adults who model particular strategies; there's some nice studies showing that, if adults play with a new toy, children play much more creatively with that same new toy subsequently.

We also know that by getting involved in children's pretend play, for example, adults can significantly increase the value of the oral language content, can become more socially and creatively complex but the key always to this is to be guided by the children and not take over the agenda.

Trust the children, they play naturally in ways which are beneficial to themselves. And what we need to see ourselves as supporters in order to enable to then develop and extend that.



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